



منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة للأمم  
المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
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Food and  
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pour  
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Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная  
организация  
Объединенных  
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Organización  
de las  
Naciones Unidas  
para la  
Alimentación y la  
Agricultura

# Regional Conference for Europe

## TWENTY-NINTH SESSION

Bucharest, Romania, 2 - 4 April 2014

### Agenda Item 14

#### Report from the outcome of the debate of the 38th Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)

1. The Thirty-eighth Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) was held in Bucharest, Romania, 1-2 April 2014.

#### Opening of the Session

2. The delegates of the ECA were welcomed by Balazs Hamar, Chair of the European Commission on Agriculture, who thanked the Government of Romania for hosting the ECA. He reiterated that the ECA serves the European Regional Conference (ERC) as a technical meeting.

3. Mr Daniel Constantin, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Romania, opened the Session and noted that the topics to be discussed are very pertinent for the Region

4. On behalf of FAO, Mr Vladimir Rakhmanin, Assistant Director-General/Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia, welcomed the participants and expressed his gratitude to the Government of Romania for its hospitality and for the excellent facilities provided for the Session. This was supported by all delegations.

5. He reminded delegates of the diverse nature of the region and stressed the need to learn from each other's experiences. He thanked the members for supporting the transformation process that FAO is going through under the guidance of the Director-General, which focuses on results, demand driven work and further decentralization.



**Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda**

6. The Commission adopted its Agenda and timetable, as given in Appendix II and Appendix III of this Report.

**Item 2: Appointment of the Rapporteur**

7. Ms Hedwig Wögerbauer (Austria) and Mr Damien Kelly (Ireland) were appointed as rapporteurs of the ECA.

**Item 4: Building inclusive and fair value chains in Europe and Central Asia: Cooperatives and their alternatives (ECA 38/14/2 Rev 1)**

8. The Commission encouraged FAO to provide legislative policy advice on cooperatives and to develop the capacities of farmers, processors, politicians and other relevant stakeholders in relation to cooperatives and their benefits, with the ultimate goal of building sustainable value chains in Europe and Central Asia.

9. The Commission noted the difficulties related to developing cooperatives and highlighted its experience in overcoming these difficulties. In this regard, FAO should collaborate with the private sector, successful cooperative movements, and countries with long standing experience in the development of different types of cooperatives.

**Item 5: Agri-Food Systems for Better Nutrition in Europe and Central Asia (ECA 38/14/3)**

10. The Commission noted that the paper provides a good overview of the challenges faced by member countries in the area of nutrition, and particularly supported the policies presented to improve the nutritional impact of food systems in the region. In this regard, the need for multisectoral and interdisciplinary approaches was highlighted.

11. Furthermore, it was noted that the predominant nutrition related issues in the region are obesity and malnutrition, although undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are still a problem in some countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus. In relation to undernutrition it was highlighted that particular attention should be given to prenatal balanced diets and postnatal feeding practices.

12. Consumer policies and appropriate nutrition labelling, which enable consumers to make informed decisions, should be developed as outlined in the ECA document. This should facilitate citizens staying healthy and well-nourished.

13. The Commission considered the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to adequate Food in the context of National Food Security as a suitable framework for the assessment of nutrition issues in the region.

14. The Commission disagreed with the statement that industries which produce fast food and soft drinks “may provide cheap nutrients that contribute to the alleviation of under-nutrition”.

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**Item 6: Towards risk-based drought management in Europe and Central Asia (ECA 38/14/4)**

15. The Commission noted that the document adequately reflects the current and future challenges related to increasing the resilience of livelihoods to droughts in Europe and Central Asia, and stressed the need to develop and implement policies, strategies and action plans on drought risk management at national and river basin levels.

16. As a major user of water resources, agriculture is the sector that is most vulnerable to drought. In light of this, investments need to be targeted and measures need to be strategically planned and implemented for reducing drought risks, combating land degradation and coping with water scarcity (e.g. modernization of irrigation systems), which would contribute to food security and support environmental benefits.

17. The Commission agreed with the conclusions and the way-forward presented in the paper, supported better integration of drought risk management and climate change aspects and multi-sectoral collaboration for effective drought management policies, and welcomed closer co-operation in the Region on drought related issues.

18. The Commission encouraged FAO and other organizations to collaborate effectively in supporting national and regional capacity development programmes and to participate actively in regional platforms dealing with drought monitoring and early warning systems (e.g. European Drought Observatory). It also welcomed the support offered by research partners to increase the use of the scientific progress in drought monitoring and impact assessment, particularly in agriculture and related sectors.

**Item 7: A focus on gender statistics in the agricultural and rural sector: progress and challenges and the Review of the Work of the Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development and its future (ECA 38/14/5 and ECA 38/14/6)**

19. The Commission took note of the results of the country gender assessment conducted in the Region (i.e. Albania, Armenia, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova) and:

a) recognized that the lack of rural/agricultural sex-disaggregated data (SDD) is an obstacle for effective work in the Region, which leads to sub-optimal planning, implementation and evaluation. In light of this, member states should be encouraged to develop capacities in SDD to better collect, disseminate and analyse relevant agri-rural data;

b) strongly supported the mainstreaming of gender in all activities;

c) strongly noted the existing gender gap in access to land, resources, extension services;

d) recognized the need to have targeted training for women involved in the agricultural sector;

20. The Commission reviewed the alternative approach proposed by the Secretariat for mainstreaming gender activities in the Region in an efficient and cost-effective manner within FAO's new Strategic Framework, in which gender features as a cross-cutting theme across all Objectives. It also endorsed the abolition of the Working Party on Women.

21. The new regional gender-focal point network and its composition were also supported. The Commission encouraged its strengthening and enlargement, including involving other ministries and institutions in addition to the Ministries of Agriculture.

#### **Item 9: Election of the MEMBERS of the Executive Committee**

22. The Commission elected Ms Natalie Feistritz as Chair of the Executive Committee for a period of four years.

23. Mr Vasily Lavrovski was re-elected for a third term of two years while the new members elected are: Mr Siim Tidemann, Mr Damien Kelly, Mr Miroslaw Drygas, Ms Marietta Okenkova and Mr Hilmi Erin Dedeoglu.

24. The Chair of the ECA thanked the outgoing members of the Executive Committee, Ms Marina Calvino, Ms Makbule Kocak, Mr Fuad Farzalibayow and Mr Hans-Jörg Lehmann for their intensive collaboration in the Executive Committee over the past years.

25. The Commission thanked the outgoing Chair, Mr Balazs Hamar, for his dedication and efforts to re-invigorate the ECA.

#### **Item 10: Other Business**

26. No other business was discussed.

#### **Item 11: Date and Place of the Thirty-NINth Session**

27. The thirty-ninth session of the Commission will be held in Budapest in 2015 with the date to be determined by the Executive Committee in collaboration with REU.

#### **Summary of conclusions presented by the Rapporteur**

28. An oral summary of the conclusions was presented by the Rapporteurs on the deliberations of the debate regarding Items 3-11. The summary was endorsed by the Commission.